

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
USMISSION SINAI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 145565
EXDIS
E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, IS, UN

SUBJECT: VIOLATION OF SINAI II

REFS: (A) USUN 1877; (B) CAIRO 9861; (C) CAIRO 9785;
(D) TEL AVIV 4319

1. THE CONSENSUS IN OUR INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY IS THAT THE
SA-7 IS AN ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILE. WE DO NOT KNOW WHETHER
THERE IS AN OFFICIALLY ACCEPTED INTERNATIONAL STANDARD ON
THIS CLASSIFICATION.

2. COMMON WESTERN MILITARY USAGE DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN
ROCKETS AND MISSILES ON THE BASIS OF WHETHER THEY HAVE A
GUIDANCE SYSTEM. FOLLOWING THIS DEFINITION, A MISSILE HAS
SUCH A SYSTEM WHILE ROCKETS FOLLOW A FREE-FLIGHT TRAJECTORY

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WHICH CANNOT BE ALTERED ONCE THEY ARE FIRED. JANES WEAPONS
SYSTEMS AND THE STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH
INSTITUTE YEARBOOK SUPPORT THIS VIEW. THE SA-7 HAS A HEAT-
SEEKING INTERNAL GUIDANCE SYSTEM. HOWEVER,

THERE IS AT LEAST ONE ANOMALY IN NON-MILITARY USAGE OF THE
TERMS ROCKET AND MISSILE: SPACE VEHICLES ARE COMMONLY

CALLED ROCKETS EVEN THOUGH THEY HAVE GUIDANCE SYSTEMS.

3. WE HAVE NO OBJECTION TO YOUR TELLING URQUHART OF OUR VIEW WHILE NOTING THAT EXPERTS MIGHT DIFFER, ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT OTHER DEFINITION THEY WOULD RELY ON.

4. IN DISCUSSING THIS SUBJECT WITH URQUHART, YOU SHOULD MAKE CLEAR THAT WE ARE NOT TRYING TO GET INTO THE MIDDLE OF THIS MATTER NOR TO PRESENT AN EXPLICIT OPINION AS TO THE INTERPRETATION OF SINAI II AS IT RELATES TO THE SA-7. THIS IS A MATTER FOR THE ISRAELIS AND THE EGYPTIANS TO SORT OUT WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE UN.

5. FYI: TO JUDGE FROM AMBASSADOR LEWIS' LAST CONVERSATION WITH ALLON, THE ISRAELIS APPEAR SOMEWHAT RELAXED ON THIS ISSUE BUT, IF TRUE, THIS MAY NOT LAST. SHOULD IT BE RAISED AGAIN, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE SUBJECT TO BE DISCUSSED AMONG THE PARTIES IN THE JOINT COMMISSION. IT IS PRECISELY THESE KINDS OF MINOR ISSUES WHICH, INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY, ERODE CONFIDENCE IN THE USEFULNESS OF THESE TYPES OF AGREEMENTS AND GUARANTEES WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL IN THE MIDEAST SETTLEMENT PROCESS. THIS WAS ESSENTIALLY THE MESSAGE THAT OUR AMBASSADORS IN TEL AVIV AND CAIRO TRIED TO GET OVER TO THEIR HOST GOVERNMENTS IN THEIR RECENT CONVERSATIONS. END FYI.

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6. WE NOTE THAT, ALTHOUGH THE SA-7 HAS ONLY BECOME A RECENT ISSUE RE SINAI II, GAMASY MAINTAINS THAT THIS IS A STANDARD WEAPON FOR ALL EGYPTIAN INFANTRY FORMATIONS. THIS RAISES THE QUESTION OF HOW LONG THE SA-7S HAVE BEEN IN THE POSSESSION OF THE EGYPTIAN ARMY IN THE LIMITED ARMAMENT ZONE. IF THESE WEAPONS HAVE BEEN PRESENT SINCE THE BEGINNING, THEN ONE CAN UNDERSTAND GAMASY'S RELUCTANCE TO CONSIDER WITHDRAWING THEM. AT THE SAME TIME GAMASY SAID THAT IF SA-7'S ARE MISSILES THEY WOULD REMOVE THEM. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO US TO HAVE THE ANSWER TO THIS PARTICULAR QUESTION AND WE SUGGEST YOU POSE IT TO URQUHART. CHRISTOPHER

NOTE BY OCT: EXDIS CAPTION ADDED PER INSTRUCTION SS/O.

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